

# THE MESSENGER

ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

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May 2011

## MISSION STATEMENT

To bring all children, youth and young adults closer to Christ and His Church through religious education, fellowship and various other events on a parish and national level.

## DATES TO REMEMBER!

May 8TH

Mother's Day

May 23RD

Victoria Day

May 29TH

Last Day of Sunday School  
& Graduation Day

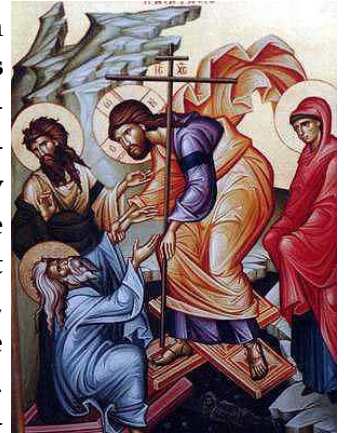
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## THOUGHTS FROM HOLY SATURDAY NIGHT 2011

Brothers and sisters, ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ!

When speaking about Pascha, St. Gregory the Theologian (a father of the Church during the 4th century) said: "It is the day of Resurrection! Let us keep the Feast with splendour, and let us embrace one another. **Yesterday** I was crucified with Him, **today** I am glorified with Him. **Yesterday** I died with Him, **today** I rise with Him. Let us become like Christ, since Christ became like us. He assumed the worst that He might give us the better. He became poor that we, through His poverty, might be rich. He took upon Him the form of a servant that we might receive back our freedom. He came down that we might be exalted. He was dishonoured that He might glorify us. He died that He might save us. May we all be one in Christ Jesus, to Whom is due all the glory and the might forever and ever!"



It is a time that the Church invites us to embrace one another, to forgive and to rejoice – for Christ embraced all, forgave all and caused all to rejoice with His conquering death by His death.

For those who we see regularly in our churches, for those who come every so often and for those who came for the first time on Pascha – **welcome!** All of us are **one family** in Christ Jesus. As Orthodox Christians, we worship as a family of believers and we hope that you can join us at the Table of the Lord (His Altar, where we receive His Body and Blood) today, tomorrow and forevermore.

St. John Chrysostom, in his Paschal sermon that we hear during every Divine Liturgy of Pascha, invites all - those who fasted and those who did not - to the Lord's table and receive Him.

**Welcome, brothers and sisters!** May this Pascha be one where we will renew our relationship with our Lord, for "this is the day the Lord has made – let us rejoice!"

## CHRIST IS RISEN! TRULY HE IS RISEN!

### GOOD FRIDAY YOUTH RETREAT 2011

On Good Friday, our Church held its annual Youth Retreat. This year, we had over 300 participants learning about Pascha and participating in various activities. Thank you to all the organizers and parents for making it a great day for everyone and the most successful retreat in the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto (Canada)!



# holy week

AT ST. DEMETRIOS CHURCH

On April 16th, **Lazarus Saturday** began our Holy Week journey to Pascha. On **Palm Sunday**, parishioners received their palm branches as blessings from the Priest. As the Bridegroom services began, the *Orpheus* choir sang the **Hymn of Kassiani** for the faithful. On Holy Wednesday in the morning, His Grace Bishop Christoforos visited our Church for the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. In the evening, the **Sacrament of Holy Unction** was celebrated for the healing of soul and body. On Holy Thursday evening, His Grace Bishop Christoforos visited our Church again for the **Passion service** and the Procession of the Cross. On **Good Friday**, our Church had its annual **Youth Retreat**, which had over 300 children and youth attending! The youth discussed the iconography of Holy Week, while the children watched an Easter movie and made crafts (while the older youth assisted them). The myrofores assisted all day, as people venerated and passed under the *Epitaphios*. In the evening, the entire congregation chanted the *Hymns of Praise* (or *Egkomia/Εγκώμια*) and participated in the procession of the *Epitaphios* around the block. On **Holy Saturday evening**, our Church celebrated with many faithful (some of which were visiting for the first time) the “Feast of Feasts”, the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the morning of **Pascha**, the last service of Holy Week was celebrated: the **Agape Service**. During this service, the Gospel reading is said in various languages. This year, faithful of our Church said the Gospel in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Latin German, and Greek (the last three being read by Fr. Kosta Pavlidis).

*Looking back on Holy Week, it was a great experience, as the entire congregation took part — in some way — when it came to the worship of the Orthodox Church. It is the Church's prayer that faithful Orthodox Christians live the resurrection of Jesus Christ all year long and participate in Orthodoxy's sacramental life!*

**ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ! CHRIST IS RISEN!**

## THANK YOU TO OUR ALTAR BOYS AND MYROFORES!!



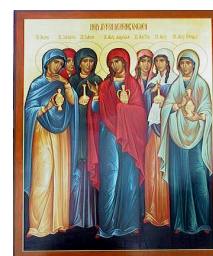
From Lazarus Saturday to the Vespers of Agape, there are fifteen services that are celebrated for Holy Week and Pascha! During each of these services, our clergy was assisted by the **17 Altar Boys** (who also help us every single Sunday). Along with the Altar Boys, we had **over 26 Myrofores** that helped our faithful throughout all day Good Friday and Holy Saturday evening (for the Anastasis service). Due to their hard work, hundreds of people passed through St. Demetrios Church to worship in a very prayerful manner, enjoying the services.

**Thanks to our Myrofores and Altar Boys! God bless you always!**

**This Month, We Celebrate...**  
**The Myrrh-bearing Women**

**The 411...**

Feastday	2nd Sunday of Pascha
Lived	1st century A.D.
Type of Saints	Martyrs





## ΘΕΙΟ ΤΟ ΕΡΓΟ

ΕΠΙΜΕΛΕΙΑ ΚΑΤΗΧΗΤΡΙΑΣ: ΚΟΜΗΣΣΑΣ ΠΟΛΥΔΟΥΑΗ

Υψηλό και θείο είναι το έργο της χριστιανικής κατήχησης. Μοναδικό προνόμιο και χριστοχάρακτη αποστολή. Τιμή σ' εκείνους που με τη δάδα της πίστης φωτίζουν την οικουμένη και λειτουργούν το ευαγγέλιο του Χριστού. Η διάδοση του ευαγγελίου περικλείει ένα ασύλληπτο μεγαλείο. Κι αυτοί οι άγγελοι επιθυμούν παρακύψαι ' Η παραγγελία του Κυρίου στους μαθητές Του ήταν «πορευθέντες μαθητεύσατε πάντα τα έθνη» και «κηρύξατε το ευαγγέλιον πάση τη κτήσει».



Το χάρισμα της χριστιανικής διδασκαλίας δεν τό'χουν όλοι, αλλά μόνο εκείνοι που τους κάλεσε ο Θεός. Αν και έργο χριστιανικό είναι ωραίο και ιερό, η κατήχηση των παιδιών και των εφήβων είναι το πιό υπέροχο και θαυμαστό. «Ίδού εγώ και τα παιδιά α μοι έδωκεν ο Θεός», ομολογεί με συναίσθηση και ταπείνωση κάθε άξιος κατηχητής. «Το κάθε παιδί» είπε κάποιος παιδαγωγός «είναι ο φοβερός τόπος προς τον οποίο πρέπει να πλησιάζει κανείς ανυπόδητος απο σεβασμό και ιερό φόβο». Δεν πρέπει να ξεχνούμε τι λέγει ο Θεός σ' αυτούς που Τον υπηρετούν: «Ίνα τι συ εκδιηγή τα δικαιώματά μου και αναλαμβάνεις την διαθήκην μου δια στόματός σου;» (Ψαλμ. 49, 16). Κι ο πιό άξιος και ταλαντούχος για το κατηχητικό έργο, δεν είναι τίποτ' άλλο παρα ένας αμαρτωλός και άχρειος δούλος.

Όταν κάποτε οι απόστολοι θέλησαν ν' απομακρύνουν τα παιδιά, ο Κύριος «ηγανάκτησε και είπουν αυτοίς 'άφετε τα παιδιά έρχεσθαι προς με, και μη κωλύετε αυτά'» (Μαρκ. 10, 14). Τ' αγάλλιασε ύστερα με την αγάπη Του και τα ευλόγησε. Αιώνια και μοναδική σκηνή στην ανθρωπινή ιστορία. Από τη στιγμή αυτή το παιδί γίνεται η πιό αγαπητή και σεβαστή προσωπικότητα. Από την αγάπη και το σεβασμό στο παιδί ξεκινά η αγωγή κι η παιδαγωγική επιστήμη.

Το έργο είναι μεγάλο και δύσκολο, αλλά κρύβει την πιό υπέροχη νίκη. Ο παιδαγωγός κατηχητής, κρατάει στα χέρια του την ελπίδα του έθνους. Δεν έχει σημασία ο αριθμός των παιδιών που του έχει αναθέσει ο Θεός. Να μη ρωτάμε τι και πόσα μας έδωκε ο Θεός, αλλά τι θα δώσουμε εμείς. «Μία και μόνο ψυχή είναι αρκετά μεγάλη αποστολή για ένα ιεραπόστολο.» Και μία ψυχή όταν μας αναθέτει ο Θεός, το έργο δεν παύει νά'ναι μεγάλο και ιερό. Την ίδια έννοια εκφράζει κι ο ερμηνευτής των Γραφών Θεοφύλακτος όταν λέγει, «μηδέ αι τας μεγάλας πόλεις επιζητείν, αλλά καν τοις χωριδίοις τοις ευτελέσει σπείρειν τον λόγον του Θεού.»

Εκείνος που δίχως εσωτερική κλίση κι αγάπη αναλαμβάνει το έργο του κατηχητή μοιάζει με τον Σίμωνα το μάγο που θέλησε με δωροδοκία να πάρει από τους αποστόλους τη θεία χάρη. Είναι προορισμένος σ' αποτυχία. Στις περιπτώσεις αυτές ισχύουν τα λόγια του Αδελφόθεου Ιακώβου: «Μη πολλοί διδάσκαλοι γίνεσθε». Όλοι μπορούν νά'ναι ακροατές, όχι όμως και ομιλίτες. Όλοι έχουν υποχρέωση ν' ακούνε, όχι όμως και να διδάσκουν.

### ABOUT THEM...

**Mary Magdalene:** Jesus healed Mary of having been possessed by seven demons (Mark 16:9). Later on, she came to be called "Equal to the Apostles" for her role in the young church, primarily in Rome and later in Ephesus with the Apostle John.

**Mary and Martha of Bethany:** After Pentecost, Mary, Martha and Lazarus were put in a leaking boat in order to kill them for their faith. Miraculously, they landed on Cyprus where Lazarus was later ordained bishop.

**Salome, Mary, Joanna, & Susanna:** Salome was the wife of Zebedee. She stayed in Jerusalem after Pentecost with her son John. Mary the wife of Cleopas left for Spain to help with his evangelism there. Joanna was the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward and lived in Tiberias by the Sea of Galilee. Susanna was another wealthy woman that we know very little about (Luke 8:3).

**Sts. Joseph of Arimathea and Nikodemus:** They were the people who took down Christ's body from the Cross on the day of His death. They played a very important role in the early Church.





**St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church**  
**Religious Education Newsletter**

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**STDemetriosTORONTO**

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The third Greek Orthodox Church in Toronto, St. Demetrios Church was founded in 1962. Since then, our Church has been the spiritual home of thousands of Orthodox faithful from Toronto and vicinity. It is one of the four Churches of the Greek Community of Toronto. The Religious Education programs have been attended by many children, youth and young adults. Our tireless staff works to promote the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Parish Priests	Rev. Fr. Konstantinos Pavlidis
Religious Education Director	Basile Polidoulis
Religious Education Advisor	Komissa Polidoulis
Homiletic Speakers	John Kapsalis, Tim Prattas
5-and-Under Class Teachers	Linda Hudson, Georgia Vlahos, Patty Tsiolis
JK-SK Class Teachers	Despina Epaminondas, Chrysoula Kapogiannis
Gr. 1 Class Teachers	Kathe Bouzios, Eleni Skandalakis
Gr. 2 Class Teacher	Kassiani Logotheti
Gr. 3 Class Teachers	Vicky Nikolaos, Vasilis Papagiannis
Gr. 4-5 Class Teachers	Elena Qirjazi
Gr. 6-7 Class Teachers	Georgia Panagiotopoulos-Grivogiannis, Eftila Qirjazi
Gr. 8-9 Class Teachers	Kiki Zourbanos, Fotini Kapsalis
Gr. 10-12 Class Teacher	Chrysostom Makropoulos
Young Adult League Leaders	Vicki Vokas, Niko Sotiropoulos

# Re-Catechism Pascha 2011

## The Christian Arts

### Where?

*St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church*  
*(30 Thorncliffe Park Drive, Toronto, 416-425-2485)*

**All Sessions from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.**

**Tuesday, May 3rd, 2011**

**Praising God through Song: Music in the Orthodox Church**

**Tuesday, May 17th, 2011**

**Windows to Heaven: Orthodox Iconography**

**\*\* Special Guest Speaker: Fr. Theodore Koufos, Iconographer**

**Tuesday, May 31st, 2011**

***Fish, Anchors and more: Christian Symbols through the centuries***

**All Are Welcome! Come and Join Us!**

*For more information, e-mail us at*

**[stdemetriosutoronto@gmail.com](mailto:stdemetriosutoronto@gmail.com)**

# Christ is Risen! Χριστός Ανέστη!